

health or safety, and are consistent with the common defense and security and (2) when special circumstances are present. According to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii), special circumstances are present whenever application of the regulation in question is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule.

The underlying purpose of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G, is to establish fracture toughness requirements for ferritic materials of pressure-retaining components of the reactor coolant pressure boundary to provide adequate margins of safety during any condition of normal operation, including anticipated operational occurrences, to which the pressure boundary may be subjected over its service lifetime. Section IV.A.2 of Appendix G requires that the reactor vessel be operated with P/T limits at least as conservative as those obtained by following the methods of analysis and the required margins of safety of Appendix G of the ASME Code.

Appendix G of the ASME Code requires that the P/T limits be calculated: (a) using a safety factor of two on the principal membrane (pressure) stresses; (b) assuming a flaw at the surface with a depth of one-quarter ($1/4$) of the vessel wall thickness and a length of six (6) times its depth; and (c) using a conservative fracture toughness curve that is based on the lower bound of static, dynamic, and crack arrest fracture toughness tests on material similar to the Watts Bar reactor vessel material.

In determining the setpoint for LTOP events, the licensee proposed to use safety margins based on an alternate methodology consistent with the ASME Code Case N-514 guidelines. The ASME Code Case N-514 allows determination of the setpoint for LTOP events such that the maximum pressure in the vessel would not exceed 110 percent of the P/T limits of the existing ASME Code Appendix G. This results in a safety factor of 1.8 on the principal membrane stresses. All other factors, including assumed flaw size and fracture toughness, remain the same. Although this methodology would reduce the safety factor on the principal membrane stress, the proposed criteria will provide adequate margins of safety on the reactor vessel during LTOP transients, and thus will satisfy the underlying purpose of 10 CFR 50.60 for fracture toughness requirements. Further, by relieving the operational restrictions, the potential for undesirable lifting of the PORV would be reduced, thereby improving plant safety.

IV

For the foregoing reasons, the NRC staff has concluded that the licensee's proposed use of the alternate methodology in determining the acceptable setpoint for LTOP events will not present an undue risk to public health and safety and is consistent with the common defense and security. The NRC staff has determined that there are special circumstances present, as specified in 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2), in that application of 10 CFR 50.60 is not necessary in order to achieve the underlying purpose of this regulation.

Accordingly, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12, this exemption is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to the public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security.

Accordingly, the Commission hereby grants an exemption from 10 CFR 50.60 such that in determining the setpoint for LTOP events, the Appendix G curves for P/T limits are not exceeded by more than 10 percent. This exemption permits using the safety margins recommended in the AMSE Code Case N-514, in lieu of the safety margins required by 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix G. This exemption is applicable only to LTOP conditions during normal operation.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the granting of the exemption will have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment (62 FR 50630).

This exemption is effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 29th day of September 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Samuel J. Collins,

Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 97-26405 Filed 10-3-97; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Termination of the Technical Specifications Plus Electronic Bulletin Board System (BBS)

Notice is hereby given that effective October 15, 1997, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will terminate the operation of the Tech Specs Plus BBS that provided a source of electronic copies of the NRC's Standard Technical Specifications. Information on the NRC's Standard Technical Specifications can be

obtained from the NRC's web site at url: <http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/sts/sts.htm>.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 30th day of September 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

William D. Beckner,

Chief, Technical Specifications Branch, Associate Director for Projects, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 97-26404 Filed 10-3-97; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Sunshine Act Meeting

AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

DATE: Wednesday, October 8, 1997.

PLACE: Commissioners' Conference Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

STATUS: Public.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:

Wednesday, October 8

3:30 pm Affirmation Session (Public Meeting)

A: Changes to paragraph (h) of 10 CFR Part 50.55a, "Codes and Standards"

B: Sequoyah Fuels Corp. & General Atomic: Docket No. 40-8027-EA; LBP-95-18 and LBP-96-24, Memoranda and Orders (Approving Settlement) (Tentative)

The schedule for Commission meetings is subject to change on short notice. To verify the status of meetings call (Recording)—(301) 415-1292.

CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION: Bill Hill, (301) 415-1661.

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The NRC Commission Meeting Schedule can be found on the Internet at: <http://www.nrc.gov/SECY/smj/schedule.htm>.

This notice is distributed by mail to several hundred subscribers; if you no longer wish to receive it, or would like to be added to it, please contact the Office of the Secretary, Attn: Operations Branch, Washington, D.C. 20555 (301-415-1661).

In addition, distribution of this meeting notice over the internet system is available. If you are interested in receiving this Commission meeting schedule electronically, please send an electronic message to wmh@nrc.gov or dkw@nrc.gov.

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William M. Hill, Jr.,

SECY Tracking Officer, Office of the Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97-26509 Filed 10-2-97; 11:42 am]

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